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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/671,689

09/29/2003

Satoshi Abe

P24340

7421

7055

7590

08/16/2006

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EXAMINER

KASTLER, SCOTT R

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1742

DATE MAILED: 08/16/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Drawings

Figures 16-18 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g). Corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bourell et al in view of the admitted prior art of the instant disclosure. Bourell et al discloses the invention substantially as claimed. Bourell et al discloses a method of forming a three-dimensional sintered product comprising providing a first powder layer, laser sintering said first powder, providing additional layers upon said first sintered powder layer, wherein each successive layer is sintered prior to providing a next layer. Bourell et al teaches that each layer may be made of the same material (see col. 3 lines 53-55 for example). Bourell et al further discloses an embodiment wherein said additional layers are of materials different from said first powder layer, inherently

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resulting in at least one of the layers having a density different from the first powder layer, (see col. 2 lines 47-60, col. 4 lines 3-12 and col. 6 lines 30-66 for example). The admitted prior art of the instant disclosure, at paragraphs [0002]-[0007] teaches that in order to reduce cracking and defects when sintering different layers together, the a higher density first or initial layer should be covered by a sintered lower density layer. In order to reduce cracking and defects as taught by the admitted prior art of the instant disclosure, it would have been a modification obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide a lower density second sintered layer over a higher density first layer in the invention of Bourell et al.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments, see pages 8-10, filed on 5/23/2006, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 1-9 under 35 USC 103 have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of Bourell et al in view of the admitted prior art of the instant disclosure as applied above.

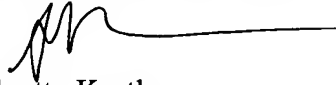
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott Kastler whose telephone number is (571) 272-1243. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy King can be reached on (571) 272-1244. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Scott Kastler
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1742

sk